



SECTION 2: What is the best approach for NZAID's support to health?

2.1 Fostering health care systems on primary health care principles

In 1978 world leaders at Alma Ata declared the goal of health for all by the year 2000. Since then, primary health care has become a core policy of development assistance to health. No universally applicable definition of primary health care exists but it is understood to be a set of principles and basic activities to guide health policy and service provision. In high and middle income countries, primary health care often refers to the first level of entry into the health system while in low income countries it is more likely to be viewed as a system-wide strategy.

The Healthy Islands vision, agreed by Pacific Island leaders in Madang, 2001, exemplifies the social, environmental and political determinants of health and health care.

Healthy Islands are places where:

- children are nurtured in body and mind;
- environments invite learning and leisure;
- people work and age with dignity;
- ecological balance is a source of pride; and
- the ocean which sustains us is protected.

Despite major changes to global, national and local environments since the Declaration at Alma Ata, support for the values or principles of primary health care remains strong. The principles of primary health care are as follows:

- Health equity as part of development orientated to social justice
- Community participation in defining and implementing health agendas
- Universal access and coverage on the basis of need
- Intersectoral approaches to health



The global health community regards primary health care as the most cost-effective and equitable way of improving the health status of populations and combating poverty. The massive social and economic loss wrought by malaria in Solomon Islands, for example, can be prevented with an investment of as little as US\$4 per person per year, through the provision of treated mosquito nets, access to timely and effective treatment and health promotion activities.

Alongside health promotion activities, it is now recognised that primary health care should also include health protection. While health promotion, as defined in the Ottawa Charter, is the process of enabling people to take control of and improve their health, health protection provides the environment through which the health of the community can be preserved. Rather than focusing on individuals, health protection places responsibility on governments to promote health through legislative and regulatory mechanisms so that individuals will ultimately find it easier to make healthy lifestyle choices.

A further element of effective primary health care is the dedicated application of the principle of intersectoral collaboration in health. Here, collaboration between health and non-health sectors in policy and programming becomes an important component in preventing ill-health. The Healthy Islands concept of primary health care provides a vision of such intersectoral collaboration.

2.2 Integration of health services

Population health and wellbeing will not be achieved through the provision of primary level services alone. Comprehensive population care of the kind envisaged by a health system based on primary health care would involve intervention across the disease continuum from health promotion and disease prevention in the community to disease management within health care services.⁹ Primary health care services focused on reducing maternal mortality ratios, for example, will not be successful unless they are linked to an adequate referral system which has the capacity to provide access to emergency obstetric care at the secondary (district hospital) level.

While it is clear that the secondary and tertiary level services of a health care system contribute to poverty elimination through the improvement of quality of life and the

9 WHO, 'World Health Report', 2004.



prevention of premature death, the provision of primary health care remains the most effective way of improving population health and eliminating poverty. Despite this fact, countries continue to prioritise secondary and tertiary level spending at the expense of primary health care services. Pacific Island countries participating in NZAID's Medical Treatment Scheme (MTS), for example, allocated approximately 67 percent of their bilateral health budgets to secondary and tertiary level care in 2005.

With the implementation of this Health Policy, NZAID will increase its support towards primary health care while at the same time keeping support for secondary and tertiary health care in Pacific partner countries participating in NZAID's Medical Treatment Scheme (MTS)¹⁰ at around current levels.

NZAID will also improve the quality of its contribution to secondary and tertiary health care by improving the accessibility and equity of the MTS and by helping build the capacity of Pacific countries participating in the schemes to meet as many of their specialist medical health care needs as possible.

The building of Pacific regional capacity in specialist medical services could then lead to greater sustainability and self-reliance across the region. In the future, therefore, it could be Pacific specialists who provide the necessary specialist care for those Pacific countries who do not possess such skills. This would also ensure that culturally appropriate services are delivered, and that any economic benefits of such service delivery are retained within the countries of the Pacific region.

2.3 Strengthening workforce capacity

It is not just the capacity of Pacific specialists that needs to be built – the Pacific health sector workforce is in serious need of strengthening across all levels of the health care system. With widespread loss of skilled health personnel through migration to metropolitan states and neighbouring island countries and significant gaps in capacity in areas such as needs assessment, health management and planning, there is an urgent need to concentrate resources on innovative solutions to address health workforce capacity.

10 NZAID's Medical Treatment Scheme (MTS) supports limited secondary and tertiary level care for participating Pacific Island countries where treatment is not available. While the larger proportion of specialist care is delivered in New Zealand, NZAID's MTS also funds visiting specialists to deliver care in the participating countries.



Such solutions should be led by governments and stakeholder communities and should focus on the issues of recruitment and retention of skilled health professionals as well as capacity building to fill gaps in the health sector. Regional approaches and the support of development partners will also be important components in the achievement of more effective and sustainable health care systems for the region.

SECTION 3: What will NZAID's level of investment in health be?

It is clear that most donors see health as an essential component of poverty elimination and sustainable development. The Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has recorded investment in health by such bilateral donors as Australia and the UK at 9.2 percent and 13.5 percent respectively, and multilateral agencies such as the World Bank invest as much as 19 percent of their budget in health and other social services. Despite these substantial investments there are still major gaps, and reorientations in the strategic directions of some donor agencies have seen funding levels fall in critical health areas such as sexual and reproductive health.

These funding gaps have meant that progress towards the health-related MDGs has been slow in comparison to progress towards other MDGs and it is now acknowledged that the health-related MDGs are unlikely to be met by 2015.¹¹ Because of this, and because of the clear links between health and poverty elimination, NZAID has identified support for health as an essential strategy within its 2005-2009 Strategic Plan. NZAID also acknowledges the important work of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health and its recommendation that in order to reach the MDGs by 2015, a seven-fold increase in donor assistance to health in low-income countries is needed.

While NZAID does not have the budget to increase its assistance to health to this extent, with the introduction of this Policy NZAID is committed to increasing the level of support it provides to health, and to improving the effectiveness of this support. The agency will take a phased approach to achieving enhanced capacity and commitment in the health area, working with our development partners to identify

11 OECD/WHO 'Poverty and Health', DAC Guidelines and Reference Series, 2003: p.11.



appropriate mechanisms for fully implementing this Policy. It is envisaged that the proportion of NZAID's overall expenditure on health will increase considerably within the next five years from the current level of approximately 8.5 percent of total Official Development Assistance (ODA).

3.1 NZAID's capacity to increase its support to health

NZAID has the capacity to play a key role in the health sector. Since its inception as a semi-autonomous agency, NZAID has employed a number of staff with both development and health expertise. These include a dedicated health advisor and a number of programme managers who have skills and experience in such critical areas as nutrition and sexual and reproductive health.

The relative size of NZAID and the flexibility and responsiveness that comes from being a small donor, also provide a comparative advantage. NZAID places a high priority on the maintenance of effective relationships with stakeholders and experience has shown that NZAID has the ability to influence other donors as an active member of the international development community. The National Department of Health in PNG, for example, recognised these skills and capacity when it asked NZAID to take up the position of the lead coordinating donor of the health sector wide approach (SWAp) in 2004.

In addition to agency capacity and the lessons learnt through its own work in the health sector, NZAID has access to lessons learnt from health initiatives designed and delivered by Pacific peoples and Tangata Whenua¹² in the health sector in New Zealand and the Pacific region. NZAID has strong links with New Zealand and Pacific based health professionals and is able to call on their expertise to assist in the development of effective and sustainable health interventions.

NZAID's capacity in health does not only come from personnel who have specific health expertise. As health is multisectoral in nature, NZAID's support to the health sector also benefits from agency expertise in education, sustainable livelihoods, institutional strengthening and evaluation. With the introduction of this policy, NZAID's health team

¹² Tangata Whenua are 'the people of the (this) land' – Aotearoa/New Zealand.



will work to ensure that the linkages between health and other sectors in policy and programming are made visible and coherent.

SECTION 4: How will NZAID support health?

4.1 Operating principles

NZAID's support for health is guided by the following NZAID overarching principles, which have been adapted to reflect the needs of the health sector:

EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

NZAID's contributions to health are designed to ensure equity in health service delivery and health outcomes. This recognises that the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is a human right of all people regardless of gender, age group, ethnicity, social class or disability. NZAID's approach also acknowledges that health inequalities exist within countries, particularly for groups such as women and girls, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities, who often face discrimination in health and special obstacles in accessing health care.

PARTNER COUNTRY DRIVEN AND PARTNERSHIP ORIENTED

NZAID supports health sector planning and development that is partner country driven and achieved through the full participation and coordination of all stakeholders (including multilateral and non-governmental) in line with the WHO primary health care approach. This approach encourages local leadership, ownership and capacity, improves relevance, ensures that support is better integrated into the planning and delivery processes of partner countries and, as a result, fosters sustainable solutions to health problems.

RESULTS ORIENTED

NZAID's support for health is directed towards achieving and monitoring health outcomes and impacts through effective and cost-efficient health interventions that



reflect the identified health needs of populations and which benefit all groups in society, including people with disabilities, people from ethnic minorities and women and girls. The measurement of results should examine, therefore, whether equality for all groups, in access to and quality of care, is increasing.

STRATEGIC AND SUSTAINABLE

NZAID endeavours to maximise the impact of its financial and technical assistance to the health sector by giving priority to interventions that are well targeted and take into account the wider determinants of health such as social and economic factors. NZAID does this by seeking to identify the most efficient and effective delivery mechanism for any activity it supports. A long-term perspective is essential, recognising that developing appropriate and sustainable systems requires a long-term vision and commitment.

BASED ON PRIMARY HEALTH CARE PRINCIPLES

NZAID's support to health will be governed by the principles of primary health care. Specifically this means that NZAID will work with partners to ensure that its support to the health sector is integrated into the work of other sectors (intersectoral approaches to health), based on health needs and health systems defined and implemented by populations (community participation in defining and implementing health agendas), available and equitable for all (health equity as part of development orientated to social justice; universal access and coverage on the basis of need).

EVIDENCE BASED

NZAID will give priority to health interventions that reflect the real needs of populations. This means that NZAID will utilise lessons learnt from previous health interventions combined with quantitative and qualitative data from partners to ensure that health investments are well targeted and achieve maximum health outcomes.



4.2 Policy coherence

NZAID's assistance to the health sector is guided by the NZAID 2005-2009 Strategic Plan and through sector and thematic policies that reinforce the social, environmental and political determinants of health care. The outcomes sought through the implementation of NZAID's Health Policy both contribute to and are enhanced by the outcomes sought by NZAID's other strategies and policies.

NZAID's **Human Rights Policy** emphasises that the right to health is 'closely related to and dependent on the realisation of other rights including the right to food, housing, work, education, human dignity, life, non-discrimination, equality, prohibition against torture, privacy, access to information, freedom of association and freedom of movement'.¹³

NZAID's **Gender Policy** recognises that health is determined by increasing decision making and leadership roles for women, closing gender gaps in health, increasing women's choices and ending violence against women.¹⁴

NZAID's **Education Policy** emphasises the crucial nature of quality education in the pursuit of good health. It has been established that parents (particularly women) with greater amounts of schooling have children that are healthier and live longer.¹⁵ Similarly, healthy children who have access to better learning opportunities are more able to benefit from the outcomes of education.

NZAID's **Trade and Development Policy** acknowledges the links between the utilisation of trade mechanisms to improve food safety, security and quality, and the maintenance of good public health.¹⁶

NZAID's **Conflict and Peace-building Policy** shows how conflict is inextricably linked to trauma and other health-related development challenges.¹⁷

However, it is not just NZAID policies that define assistance to the health sector. Wider New Zealand government and international policies in areas such as trade,

¹³ NZAID Human Rights Policy, 2003.

¹⁴ NZAID Gender Policy, 1998.

¹⁵ NZAID Education Policy, 2004.

¹⁶ NZAID Trade and Development Policy, 2003.

¹⁷ NZAID Conflict and Peace-building Policy, 2004.



immigration and health influence development outcomes. In implementing this policy, NZAID will work with other government agencies, stakeholders and partners to ensure that the achievement of the best health outcomes for populations is central to policy development in these relevant areas.

SECTION 5: NZAID's partnerships

NZAID's approach to health is through partnerships that strengthen local leadership, self-determination and capacity in health sector development. While NZAID supports partnerships in health in all the regions in which it works including Asia, Africa and Latin America, NZAID's core geographical focus in health is the Pacific Region.

NZAID's contribution to the health sector is made through

- working with and responding to health ministries and associated agencies through bilateral health programmes (in coordination with other donors);
- contributing to Pacific health at a regional level;
- participating effectively in global health arenas and supporting multilateral and regional agencies; and
- supporting civil society organisations working to improve health outcomes at the grass-roots level.

5.1 BILATERAL PROGRAMMES

NZAID supports the health programmes of its core bilateral partner countries through technical assistance, support to indigenous NGOs, training, policy dialogue around priority setting and resource allocation, and encouragement and support to and for national planning and budgeting processes. NZAID places importance on promoting a primary health care approach and where relevant meeting international goals such as the MDGs and the ICPD Programme of Action. NZAID also works with our bilateral partners to ensure gender and disability sensitive programmes are in place to increase equitable access and improve the quality of health care services.

Where countries have developed sound national health sector strategic plans which are based on broad consultation, NZAID will consider moving towards directly



supporting the implementation of these plans through programme or budget assistance. In PNG, NZAID is supporting a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) in the health sector, working with the government, NGOs and other donors to achieve the health outcomes prioritised in the government's National Health Plan and Medium Term Expenditure Framework. Where capacity is limited and where requested, NZAID will work towards institutional strengthening of national health planning in recognition of the positive relationships between effective institutional frameworks and sustained health development.

In partner countries where NZAID's programmes are smaller or where we are less able to engage at the level of programme or budget support, NZAID will consider cosponsoring the work of other donors or agencies in the health sector and ensure support is aligned to Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). In Viet Nam, for example, NZAID is working with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to promote wellbeing during pregnancy and safe motherhood, as well as enhanced child survival. In other bilateral programmes, where there is a current focus on other sectors, NZAID will engage in policy dialogue with our partners to ensure that recognition and support for health, including HIV/AIDS, is included across other programmes such as sustainable rural livelihoods, or education.

5.2 HEALTH IN THE PACIFIC REGIONAL PROGRAMME

Given the smallness of many Pacific Island countries and the fact that many diseases do not respect national boundaries and may be better controlled through collaborative regional approaches, NZAID invests in health at a regional level in the Pacific.

Regional approaches promote cost efficiencies and information sharing and are particularly relevant in cases such as the procurement of affordable medicines or where there is a strong imperative to work collaboratively to confront major regional health challenges such as HIV/AIDS and non-communicable diseases. Regional approaches also have the advantage of being able to address issues that may be culturally or politically sensitive and provide a platform to enhance donor coordination and the piloting of new approaches.



NZAID provides core funding to and works with Pacific regional organisations such as the Forum Secretariat (Forsec) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), to ensure that regional approaches are implemented in support of regional health challenges. Complementing NZAID's work with regional organisations is the Pacific Regional Health Programme, which also supports regional approaches to health sector development that address common health issues across the Pacific. The promotion of better coordination and harmonisation between countries and donors assisting those countries, is, and will continue to be, a priority in the Pacific Regional Health Programme.

In implementing this Policy, NZAID will also seek synergies between bilateral, regional and multilateral programmes to ensure that all support to health is well coordinated and aligned to overarching policy goals.

5.3 ENGAGEMENT WITH NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS (NGOS) AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN NZ

Recognising the key role that NGOs play in the promotion of health and the elimination of poverty, NZAID supports international development organisations within New Zealand and partner countries to implement health programmes at the grass-roots level.

NZAID supports development partners of member organisations of the Council for International Development (CID) and other NGOs through such mechanisms as the Voluntary Assistance Support Scheme (VASS) as well as directly supporting the work of civil society groups in partner countries through bilateral, regional and multilateral assistance frameworks. Where the capacity of NGOs is limited in partner countries, NZAID will work to build capacity through technical assistance and direct financial support.

NZAID's work in health also promotes policy coherence through strong and constructive relationships with New Zealand agencies and with the diverse



stakeholder groups in the health and development community, including the business and consultancy sector, Pacific and indigenous organisations such as the Pasifika Medical Association, the academic community and the general public.

5.4 PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

NZAID recognises the important contribution the private sector can make to the development and implementation of health services in our partner countries. NZAID acknowledges the significance of the synergies that can occur between private and public sector interests to provide better health facilities and programmes to the community.

Through such vehicles as bilateral and regional programmes and the Asia Development Assistance Facility (ADAF), NZAID offers support to developmental activities undertaken by the private sector as well as by public/private partnerships.

5.5 MULTILATERAL AGENCIES

In the context of the principles and aims outlined in this document, NZAID prioritises those multilateral organisations that work within the priority areas and mechanisms identified in this Policy. NZAID supports key multilateral organisations such as the WHO, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). These organisations, provided that they are assessed positively through NZAID's Multilateral and Regional Agency Assessment Framework, are supported through core and earmarked contributions to their development programmes and projects.

NZAID also contributes directly to international debate and policy dialogue around health and development issues through participation in ministerial meetings, and international and regional conferences and roundtables. NZAID supports partner countries' participation in relevant international and regional health and development processes and events so that



they can gain the benefits of association and take a leadership role in developing and sustaining those benefits.

In addition to this engagement, NZAID will also focus its efforts on public policy dialogue in recognition of the value that New Zealand can add through its development agency and as a Pacific nation. The following areas of public policy are priorities for NZAID:

5.5.1 HIV/AIDS

NZAID has an important role to play in supporting and advocating, along with its Pacific partners, for the special needs of the Pacific region to be recognised and incorporated into regional and international public policy development and dialogue on HIV/AIDS.

Effective relationships with Pacific partners and access to lessons learnt from the New Zealand response to the virus (including work with New Zealand based Pacific communities), underpins support and encouragement to Pacific partners to mount a more effective response to the epidemic. This response should focus on the core elements of the Pacific Regional Strategy for HIV/AIDS, the key pillars adopted at the 2nd Asia/Pacific Minister's Meeting on HIV/AIDS (2004), and on international best practice and policy such as the UNAIDS '3 ones' principle and the WHO 3x5 strategy for access to anti-retroviral treatment.¹⁸

NZAID will prioritise support for HIV/AIDS activities across all relevant programmes. It will also commit to developing an HIV/AIDS strategy and implementation plan based on a mainstreaming approach to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care.

5.5.2 DISABILITIES

With access to lessons learnt from support for disability-related activities in the Pacific region, an agency focus on human rights and New Zealand's active contribution to the development of the draft Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, NZAID is in a position to support and advocate for the active

18 The key pillars endorsed by the 2nd Asia Pacific Meeting on HIV/AIDS are, leadership and resource mobilisation, enhanced community engagement with infected and affected communities, and multisectoral policy and legislative preparedness.



participation of people living with disabilities in public policy dialogue, development and implementation in all relevant areas.

NZAID will seek to raise awareness of the need to approach disabilities from a rights-based framework focusing on equality and empowerment. With this goal in mind, NZAID commits itself, over time, to developing a mainstreaming approach to disability support which will see the needs and aspirations of people living with disabilities integrated across all relevant policies and programmes.

5.5.3 NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

With the significant burden created by non-communicable disease in the Pacific and within New Zealand, NZAID is well placed to advocate for and contribute to debate on the most effective ways of preventing and controlling non-communicable disease. NZAID has access to lessons learnt from successful interventions in Maori and Pacific communities in New Zealand and, through its effective relationships, is able to share these lessons with partners for whom non-communicable disease poses a serious threat.



SECTION 6: How will NZAID prioritise its support to health?

NZAID will prioritise its support to the health sector according to:

- health priorities identified in consultation with partners through national health plans and strategic planning documents;
- key international development goals for the health sector such as the MDGs and the ICPD Programme of Action;
- a central focus on primary health care;
- the need to link health with work in other sectors in order to promote intersectoral collaboration;
- the need to consider capacity building across the health sector workforce;
- areas where there are identified gaps in donor and national investment in health in order to promote better coordination and harmonisation;
- areas where New Zealand has expertise such as non-communicable disease prevention in the Pacific region; and
- areas where there are mutual benefits for New Zealand and the partner country such as the prevention of communicable disease in the Pacific region.

The focus of NZAID's support for health will also be guided by the need to concentrate efforts on primary health care, and to support approaches that build on principles of equity and human rights, and evidence-based, partner country priorities and partnerships that lead to strategic and sustainable outcomes.



...towards a safe and just world

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